

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 16862

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IT, CI

SUBJECT: ITALIAN/CHILEAN RELATIONS

REF: SANTIAGO 7133

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON ITALIAN/CHILEAN RELATIONS AND THE ITALIAN DOMESTIC DYNAMICS SHAPING THEM.

2. (AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY) THE MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO GOI RECOGNITION OF PRESENT CHILEAN GOVERNMENT IS DOMESTIC OPPOSITION ARTICULATED BY ITALIAN SOCIALISTS. EX-FONMIN, NOW PRIME MINISTER, MORO, ON THE LEFT WING OF THE CHIRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WAS NOT INCLINED TO RISK SOCIALIST REACTION TO RECOGNITION. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, NEW FONMIN (EX-PRIME MINISTER) RUMOR IS UNLIKELY TO RECOMMEND RECOGNITION SINCE HE HAS NO RPT NO DESIRE TO APPEAR QUOTE MORE REACTIONARY THAN MORO UNQUOTE.

3. ITALIAN SOCIALISTS HAVE SIEZED ON CHILE ISSUE IN LAST YEAR OR SO, DROPPING A COMPARABLE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN RE BRAZIL IN THE PROCESS. SOCIALISTS SEE CHILE ISSUE AS MEANS OF KEEPING GOI FOREIGN POLICY CLOSED TO MOVES RIGHTWARD AND OPEN TO MOVES TOWARD A MORE QUOTE LIBERAL UNQUOTE POLICY. MOREOVER, THEY ARE PERSUADED THAT CIA BROUGHT ABOUT ALLENDE'S DOWNFALL AND ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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GENUINELY FEARFUL THAT US MIGHT BRING CIA INTO PLAY WHEN ITALY

GOES SOCIALIST.

4. ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) TO CONTRARY, PRESENTS NO PROBLEM TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ON CHILE. IN FACT, PER SOURCE, A SENIOR PCI FUNCTIONARY HAD RECENTLY CALLED AT FOREIGN MINISTRY AND, DURING CONVERSATION, SAID AS FAR AS PCI IS CONCERNED, CHILEAN COMMUNISTS CAN STAY IN JAIL QUOTE FOR TWENTY YEARS IF NECESSARY UNQUOTE TO ASSURE THAT THEY WILL BE AROUND FOR ACTION WHEN THE MILITARY IS DRIVEN FROM OFFICE.

5. ROME HAS BECOME MOST IMPORTANT EXTERIOR CHILEAN RESISTANCE CENTER LARGELY DUE TO WARM WELCOME ACCORDED ALLENDE PROPONENTS BY SOCIALISTS AND QUOTE OTHERS UNQUOTE. MANY OF ALLENDE'S EX-AMBASSADORS ARE LIVING HERE IN EVIDENT COMFORT AND TRAVEL BROADLY, DESPITE NO EVIDENT MEANS OF SUPPORT. QUOTE SOMEBODY IS PAYING THEM UNQUOTE SAID OUR CONTACT BUT WOULD NOT SPECULATE AS TO WHOM.

6. FONMIN VERSION OF CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING DEATH OF SENORA VIDELA, AND THROWING OF BODY INTO EMBASSY COMPOUND, ALMOST EXACTLY PARALLELS VERSION CITED PARA 2 REFTEL, INCLUDING CLEAR EVIDENCE OF EXTENSIVE TORTURE BEFORE DEATH. FONMIN BELIEVES THAT HER DEATH AROSE FROM RIVALRIES BETWEEN TWO OR MORE CHILEAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES, AND THAT DUMPING OF BODY IN EMBASSY COMPOUND WAS ATTEMPT TO EMBARRASS ITALO/CHILEAN RELATIONS. VOLPE

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